

MISSOURI SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY PANEL Annual Report

Beverly Woodhurst, Chair
Fiscal Year 2007-08

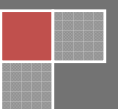


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This annual report was published by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) and is available at the following website: dese.mo.gov/divspeced/Administration/AdvisoryPanel/94142reports.html.

Printed (7/08)

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Introduction

This annual report of the Missouri Special Education Advisory Panel (SEAP) is respectfully submitted to the Commissioner of the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) for the State of Missouri. The reporting period is June 1, 2007, through May 31, 2008. The annual report is a summary of panel activities and recommendations during the reporting period. The panel operates in a collaborative spirit with DESE's Division of Special Education in identifying and addressing areas of concern. The panel convenes on a regular basis to review issues relevant to special education in Missouri. Subcommittees meet throughout the year to examine specific targeted areas. The panel is composed of stakeholders, including:

- ✚ Parents of children with disabilities;
- ✚ Individuals with disabilities;
- ✚ Teachers;
- ✚ Representatives of institutions of higher education;
- ✚ Administrators of programs for children with disabilities;
- ✚ Representatives of state agencies;
- ✚ Representatives of private schools and public charter schools;
- ✚ A representative of a vocational, community, or business organization concerned with the provision of transition services; and,
- ✚ A representative from the state juvenile and adult corrections agencies.

Advisory Panel Duties

The advisory panel is authorized under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). The role of the panel is advisory and not advocacy. The panel provides policy guidance on special education and related services and carries out those specific and general functions set forth in IDEA. The panel shall:

- ✚ Advise the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education of unmet needs within the state in the education of children with disabilities;
- ✚ Comment publicly on any rules or regulations proposed by the state regarding the education of children with disabilities;
- ✚ Advise DESE in developing evaluations and reporting on data to the U.S. Department of Education under Section 618 of the Act;
- ✚ Advise DESE in developing corrective action plans to address findings identified in federal monitoring reports under Part B of the Act;
- ✚ Advise DESE in developing and implementing policies relating to the coordination of services for children with disabilities;
- ✚ Advise DESE in review of complaints and due process hearings; and,
- ✚ Advise on programs for eligible students with disabilities in juvenile and adult corrections agencies.

Missouri's Vision for Special Education Services

We, the people of Missouri, believe that diversity enhances our culture; therefore, we commit our resources and efforts to accept, educate, and support all children and youth. All children and youth, being of diverse backgrounds and abilities, will have access to all learning activities with accommodations and supports to enable them to succeed. All children and youth are actively engaged in creating their own futures; are prepared for life as independent, informed, and empowered citizens; and, are embraced as vital, valued, and contributing members of their communities.

Therefore, we need inclusive communities and schools that:

- ✚ Recognize that all children and youth can learn;
- ✚ Commit to providing equitable opportunities for all children and youth;
- ✚ Build on the individual strengths and abilities of each child and youth;
- ✚ Collaborate for the benefit of all children and youth; and,
- ✚ Recognize and involve families as full partners.

The Special Education Advisory Panel is committed to this vision. We believe all children, including those in special education, are entitled to and deserving of fair and equitable treatment by the educational system. We believe all local school systems and all students should be held to the highest standards and that all students should receive an appropriate and quality education to prepare them for life beyond the school years.

The panel recognizes there have always been and will continue to be challenges in providing an appropriate education for each individual student. It is the firm belief and commitment of this panel that the needs of the individual student should be the prime concern of those involved in creating an individualized program. The panel feels a strong responsibility to represent the interests of all students in special education in achieving the best possible outcomes for them in the educational process. The best outcomes can be achieved when all stakeholders work together in a collaborative manner for the best interests of the individual student.

Panel Activities

The advisory panel engages in a number of activities to fulfill its role of advising the Division on special education issues. The following describes activities from 2007-08.

1. Missouri State Performance Plan (SPP)

The reauthorized Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) of 2004 established a series of monitoring priority areas which states must address for students with disabilities. In turn, the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) subsequently established performance indicators for each of the priority areas.

One year from the date of the reauthorization of the IDEA 2004, all states were required to develop and submit to OSEP a State Performance Plan (SPP). The SPP was to indicate, for each of the priority performance indicators, the state's "measurable and rigorous" targets for performance from 2006 through 2011. The plan also had to specify improvement activities which were reasonably calculated to ensure the state would reach the targets by 2011.

Missouri submitted its SPP on December 1, 2005. On an annual basis thereafter, the state

must submit an Annual Performance Report (APR) on progress made towards the targets and the activities completed during the fiscal year, along with any necessary revisions to the SPP. In February 2007, Missouri submitted its first Annual Performance Report (APR) for 2005-2006. The second APR was submitted in February 2008. The panel has an active role in reviewing the SPP and APR and serves as the primary stakeholders group for the process. The SPP and APR documents are located on the Division's website at the following address: www.dese.mo.gov/divspeced/SPPpage.html.

- ✚ Increasing student performance is the objective of the SPP. Student performance is everyone's job. It is important to ensure students with disabilities have access to the general education curriculum and environment so they may acquire the skills they need to transition successfully to post-secondary education or employment.
- ✚ Each year, the state is required to report to OSEP its progress toward meeting the targets on the SPP. The state is also required to report publicly the performance of every district in the state on each of the indicators.
- ✚ Monitoring of districts in the fourth cycle of MSIP (2006-2007 through 2010-2011) will be focused on district's performance on the indicators, rather than on procedural compliance.

	SPP Indicator	Data Source	2006-07 State Performance	2006-07 Target	2010-11 Target
1	Graduation rate for students with disabilities	DESE Core Data	72.8%	≥74.0%	≥78.5%
2	Dropout rate for students with disabilities	DESE Core Data	5.7%	≤4.5%	3.8%
3a	Percent of districts meeting AYP	DESE Assessment	10.6%	≥33.0%	≥37.0%
3b	Participation rate for children with IEPs on statewide assessments	DESE Assessment	99.3%	≥95.0%	≥95.0%
3c	Proficiency rate for children with IEPs on statewide assessments	DESE Assessment	CA 17.6% Math 20.9%	CA ≥42.9% Math ≥35.8%	CA ≥75.5% Math ≥72.5%
4a	Percent of districts identified as having significant discrepancies in suspension/expulsion rates	DESE Core Data	0.0%	≤1.5%	0.5%
4b	Percent of districts identified as having significant discrepancies in suspension/expulsion rates by race/ethnicity	DESE Core Data	N/A	N/A	N/A
5a	Percent of children with IEPs removed from regular class < 21% of the day	DESE Core Data	55.8%	≥60.0%	≥64.0%
5b	Percent of children with IEPs removed from regular class > 60% of the day	DESE Core Data	10.6%	≤10.9%	10.5%
5c	Percent of children with IEPs served in segregated settings	DESE Core Data	3.70%	≤3.45%	3.20%
6	Percent of children ages 3-5 with IEPs in settings with typically developing peers	DESE Core Data	N/A	N/A	N/A
7	Percent of preschool children with IEPs who demonstrate improved <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. positive social-emotional skills b. acquisition and use of knowledge and skills c. use of appropriate behaviors to meet needs 	New collection	NA	TBD	TBD

	SPP Indicator	Data Source	2006-07 State Performance	2006-07 Target	2010-11 Target
8	Percent of parents who report school facilitated parent involvement as a means of improving services and results for children with disabilities	MSIP Parent Survey	69.4%	≥77.0%	≥85.0%
9	Percent of districts with disproportionate representation of racial and ethnic groups in special education and related services that is the result of inappropriate identification	DESE Core Data	0.0%	=0.0%	=0.0%
10	Percent of districts with disproportionate representation of racial and ethnic groups in specific disability categories that is the result of inappropriate identification	DESE Core Data	0.0%	=0.0%	=0.0%
11	Percent of children with parental consent to evaluate who were evaluated and eligibility determined within 60 days	New collection via MSIP cycle	94.0%	=100%	=100%
12	Percent of children referred by Part C prior to age 3, who are found eligible for Part B, and who have an IEP developed and implemented by their third birthdays.	Collected via MSIP cycle	94.9%	=100%	=100%
13	Percent of youth age 16 and above with an IEP that includes coordinated, measurable, annual IEP goals and transition services that will reasonably enable the student to meet the post-secondary goals	New collection via MSIP cycle	73.2%	=100%	=100%
14	Percent of youth who had IEPs, are not longer in secondary school, and who have been competitively employed, enrolled in some type of postsecondary school, or both, within one year of leaving high school	DESE Core Data and new collection for dropout follow-up	73.5%	N/A	≥75.5%
15	Percent of findings of noncompliance corrected within 12 months	Compliance	95.4%	=100%	=100%
16	Percent of complaints resolved within 60 day or extended timelines.	Child complaint/ due process database	100.0%	=100%	=100%
17	Percent of due process hearings fully adjudicated within 45 day or appropriately extended timelines.	Child complaint/ due process database	100.0%	=100%	=100%
18	Percent of hearing requests that went to resolution sessions that were resolved through resolution session settlement agreements	Child complaint/ due process database	46.2%	≥50.0%	≥35.3%
19	Percent of mediations that result in a mediation agreement	Child complaint/ due process database	55.5%	≥62.5%	≥35.3%
20	Percent of state reported data that are timely and accurate	Federal reports	99.1%	=100.0%	=100.0%

NA designates 2006-07 data or targets that were not available or required in the SPP. TBD designates targets are to be determined in a future SPP revision.

2. Formal Recommendations to DESE

Formal Recommendation 13 (Process for Notifying the Panel of Pending Legislation, Feb. 2006)

Resolved FY07.

Formal Recommendation #9 (Guidelines/Parameters for a Child Complaint Review, June 2004)

There is currently a database in place to track the survey information. The division is receiving very few child complaint surveys returned and DESE staff have been discussing options for getting more surveys returned. At the December 7, 2007, meeting, Heidi Atkins Lieberman presented data which included the types of child complaint issues, comparison data by year, and summary information by allegation/complaint with the panel. At the March 13, 2008, meeting, the recommendation was made to refer back to the monitoring committee for review with a final decision to be made at the June 2008 meeting.

DESE asked the panel what they would like to have done. Panel indicated it appears that the survey process does not inhibit anyone from replying and if people choose not to respond, DESE has done the best it can to gather the information. DESE will continue to send the surveys for one more year and bring the results to the panel periodically.

Formal Recommendation #12 (Lowest Level Resolution, February 2006)

Resolved FY07.

3. Participation in OSEP Conference

Heidi Atkins Lieberman (DESE), Pam Williams (DESE), and Pat Jackson (parent member of SEAP), attended the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) leadership conference in August 2007. Pat Jackson attended the break-out session for SEAP members and found it very enjoyable and interesting. She reported to the SEAP about the conference. The conference contained many, many sessions, most of which were geared toward specific State Performance Plan (SPP) indicators. Additionally, there was a session on the Fiscal Management Reviews that OSEP will now be conducting. Eight states were selected and discovered their selection at the time of the conference. Missouri was not selected for this first year. A document outlining all areas to be monitored was shared and Pam and Heidi brought this back for DESE personnel. School districts were notified of the need to ensure proper fiscal documentation and the anticipated review. An electronic calendar was unveiled for states to use in implementing the SPP/APR activities, to help prepare the Annual Performance Reports due each February. The calendar helps organize all the many activities needed to complete the APR. There was also a general session presented by Dean Fixsen; Dr. Fixsen is a highly respected expert in systems change and spoke on implementation of effective practices. OSEP also provided many practice tips to improving the quality of APRs by highlighting the common problems they noticed during their review of each state's APR.

4. Amendments to the Bylaws

Changes were considered to the bylaws to include alumni members but, in looking at what other states do, there was no justification to do this in addition to the fact that it would require a change to the State Plan.

5. Synopsis of Panel Meeting Activities for FY 2008

For more detailed information on the meeting minutes, go to the following link:

<http://dese.mo.gov/divspeced/Administration/AdvisoryPanel/AdvisoryPanelMinutes.html>

Panel Meeting - March 13, 2008

Kansas University Transition Coalition – Mary Morningstar from Kansas University presented information on the work they have been doing on transition activities in partnership with the state of Missouri. Barb Gilpin, Interim Assistant Director, Special Education Effective Practices Section, assisted her in the presentation. To review the PowerPoint presentation, go to dese.mo.gov/divspeced/Administration/AdvisoryPanel/APMhndout03_08.html. For additional information about the KU Transition Coalition and the Communities of Practice, go to www.transitioncoalition.org/cgiwrap/tcacs/new/index.php.

End of Course Exams – Stan Johnson, Assistant Commissioner, Division of School Improvement indicated that the High School Reform Committee met a few years back and discussed options for reforming schools and helping students. One of the committee's three main goals was to raise the minimum graduation requirement. They formed a subcommittee to look at high school assessment. Two of the options they came up with were end of course exams and the ACT. After much discussion, it was finally decided to go with end of course exams. Next school year there will be end of course exams in three subjects (Algebra I, Biology, and Communication Arts II) that every student in the state will take. This will be field tested this spring. Districts have discretion on how much the test will weigh towards the student's overall grade for that course. The multiple choice portion of the test will be scored and back to the district within five school days. On the written portion within five school days of submitting the test, the district will receive an electronic copy of the student's test, not scored; it can then be scored locally by the teacher. The state will also score but the results will not be available until July. DESE took the current grade level expectations and developed them into course level expectations. The same accommodations that we now have with MAP/MAP-A will be allowed for the end of course exams.

DESE Update

- **Dropouts** – In response to the question raised at the last meeting, Heidi indicated while there has been discussion about legislation to change the age for compulsory attendance from 16 to 18 but there is no bill pending in the legislature at this time.
- **Part B Grant application follow up** – The comment period ends next week. No comments have been received yet. April 4 is the end of posting period. It is due to OSEP by May 16.
- **SELS/SELS2** – The Division's main form of communication with districts is through our email group (SELS) which is a limited email group available to only one contact person per school district. Many times, though, the SELS messages were not being forwarded within districts so SELS2 was created. This email group is open to anyone wanting to subscribe (principals, teachers, parents, etc.). It allows subscribers to receive the EXACT same messages as subscribers to SELS. By creating this second email group, all constituents interested in special education will have the opportunity to receive the

Division's email messages. A list of archived SELS messages is located at dese.mo.gov/divspeced/Listserv_Archives.html. SELS2 is a good way for panel members to keep up with what is going on at DESE and will assist panel members in their role of providing DESE with advice. If you are interested in subscribing, contact Lina Browner at lina.browner@dese.mo.gov.

- **Work of the Highly Qualified Teacher (HQT) Committee** – DESE created a committee last year which included individuals from institutions of higher education with teacher training programs to look at teacher competencies in regular and special education. The committee was asked to look where there was overlap in teacher training in the core competencies and if additional teacher training courses were needed. If so, could they be integrated into courses already available? As part of the process, the committee conducted a survey of first year teachers, building principals, and administrators. After the information was collected and reviewed, the HQT committee met with approximately 35 representatives from Missouri's institutions of higher education to discuss what changes they were recommending.
- **State Board Meeting** – End of course exams is on the agenda almost monthly. Most of the February meeting got cancelled due to the weather which postponed the Autism update and recommendations from the Blue Ribbon Autism Panel. In January, Stan Johnson and Heidi did a presentation on kids in residential facilities placed there by Children's Division. There was no December state board meeting.

Miscellaneous

- **Improvement Grants** – DESE received an incredible response for improvement grants this year. Many of the applications focused on systems change and use of three tiered models of intervention.
- **Deaf Summit** – The Deaf Summit convened by MSD is scheduled for April 25. The topic is what needed to be done to improve literacy for students that are deaf or hard of hearing. The Summit includes key administrators of programs at school districts and schools for the Deaf including oral schools.
- **Applied Behavioral Analysis Scholarships** – DESE has received quite a few applications from employees with school districts. Approximately 18 people were selected to receive a full scholarship with the University of Florida.
- **Member Attendance** – Currently, a few members have exceeded the maximum number of meetings they are allowed to miss. The panel's bylaws are specific on what to do if members miss meetings but are not legally binding. The panel discussed and asked DESE to enforce the bylaws as written and remove panel members when they have exceeded the allowable number of meetings as stated in the bylaws.

Panel Meeting – December 7, 2007

Missouri Resources (MORE) – Barb Gilpin presented information on Missouri Resources (MORE). MORE is a searchable database that contains the latest resources about the special education outcome indicators specified by the Federal Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP). The intent of the database is to make available current and relevant information about each special education results area. The database is intended to enhance the knowledge base of results teams and enrich the planning activities to improve outcome data and includes an online resource located at www.northcentralrrc.org/sppinformationsupportsystem/index.aspx.

OSEP Leadership Conference – Pat Jackson attended the OSEP Leadership Conference and shared her experiences with the panel. She will share the information she obtained at the conference with the Executive Committee.

Mental Health Services – Dr. John Heskett with the Department of Mental Health (DMH) presented information on the additional mental health services they are providing to children in Missouri. In 2004, legislation was passed that directed a group of individuals facilitated by DMH to create a comprehensive mental services children's plan and a comprehensive services management team. It also created the Office of Comprehensive Mental Health which is responsible for creating policies within DMH and other agencies to create services to support children. The goal is to have comprehensive school-based mental health services available in school districts which could further support the services that students in school districts are already receiving. If the requested \$7 million appropriation is received, DMH will be putting out RFPs in the spring for communities and would be able to fund up to 107 mental health professionals in districts throughout the state.

www.dmh.mo.gov/diroffice/depdirc/childsvcs/ChildrenInitiative.htm

Due Process Hearings/Disclosure – The link to the 2006-07 due process hearing decisions was sent to panel members prior to the meeting and a hard copy of each decision was available at the meeting for panel members to review dese.mo.gov/divspeced/Complaint_System/06-07_DPDecision.html.

DESE Update

- **Child Complaints** – Child complaint information was emailed to panel members prior to the meeting. Heidi Atkins Lieberman discussed the information which included the types of child complaint issues, comparison data by year, and summary information by allegation/complaint with the panel.
- **APR/SPP** – The draft APR and SPP were sent to panel members prior to the meeting for their review and feedback. DESE must submit both to OSEP by February 1, 2008. Additional feedback and comments can be submitted to Heidi Atkins Lieberman until December 31. Heidi Atkins Lieberman requested specific feedback on *SPP indicator 1 and 2 (graduation and dropout)* as well as *18 and 19 (success of resolution sessions and mediations)*. *SPP indicator 1 and 2*, an issue exists in recording data including DOC versus not including DOC in the graduation and dropout numbers. DESE is working on a new student specific database that will be ready in a year or two that should be very accurate. The panel was asked if a change to the target should be made and what target should be used if changed. A motion was made to give DESE discretion in changing the target. The motion was seconded and passed. *SPP indicators 18 and 19*, the targets attempt to judge whether parties are able to reach resolution through a resolution session or mediations and hold districts accountable for whether it is successful or not. DESE currently has a 50% target for resolution session and a 62.5% target for mediation. In researching other states targets, it was discovered that many states targets are set at 30%. The panel was asked for its recommendation and the panel made a motion to allow DESE to consider lowering the targets to the 30% range. Heidi Atkins Lieberman briefly discussed the other indicators and their status as met or not met. Several other indicators have not been met but have improved substantially.

- **MO Options Program** – This is the issue of whether or not inmates can participate in the MO options program. DOC is concerned about some issues (would this include the full population or just a certain age group). More discussion is planned with DOC and the panel will be updated at a later date.
- **Part B Application** – DESE has received our Part B application from OSEP. DESE is required to post the completed application for sixty days with a thirty day public comment period. A notice will be sent via SELS indicating when comments can be made. The goal is to post from February 4 until April 4 with the public comment from February 18 to March 18.
- **Incidence Rates** – Information regarding the MOVIP program was handed out at the meeting. Additional information is available at dese.mo.gov/divimprove/curriculum/movip/.
- **September State Board Update**
 - Dr. Tim Lewis, Professor and Associate Dean, University of Missouri-Columbia, College of Education; Dr. Mary Richter, Missouri State Coordinator for School-wide Positive Behavioral Support; and Julie LePage, Interim Director, Effective Practices, DESE, presented information to the State Board on Positive Behavior Supports.
 - Information was presented on end of course exams. MAP-A will still exist at the high school level. Students with disabilities will have to take the end of course exams.
 - Heidi Atkins Lieberman and Ginger Luetkemeyer served on the Blue Ribbon Autism Panel. The report will be available shortly and does not reflect agreement of all members of the panel.

Panel Meeting – August 17, 2007

Network of Care Webpage – Nancy Nickolaus from the Department of Mental Health (DMH), Division of MR/DD presented information regarding the Network of Care and its webpage missouri.networkofcare.org/home_state.cfm?stateid=30 along with disseminating a resource packet to panel members. The Network of Care is an online information place for individuals, families, and agencies concerned with mental and emotional wellness, substance abuse, and developmental disabilities. The webpage provides critical information, communication, and advocacy tools with a single point of entry. The webpage assists users in finding needed information, support, advocacy, and the right services at the right time for a person with disabilities.

DESE Update

- **Update from the Data Management Meeting in DC** – Heidi Atkins Lieberman made reference to a recent SELS message which indicated that changes to the SPP and APR were out for public comment. Division staff are reviewing the changes and will be submitting comments as needed. The proposed changes can be viewed at edicsweb.ed.gov/browse/unapproved.cfm.
- **State Personnel Development Grant (SPDG) Update** – Heidi Atkins Lieberman indicated that Missouri was awarded the SPDG grant at \$1.3 million per year. The grant focuses on the development and implementation of an integrated model by looking at what three-tiered models of intervention are currently available and integrating them. The Division is planning to start with two school districts per

RPDC region during the first year. Staff hope to have the model developed and plans for the training completed by the end of the school year.

- **Child Complaints/Due Process** – Heidi Atkins Lieberman gave a preliminary update on the number of due process hearings, dismissals, etc. for FY 07. The official due process disclosure will be at the December panel meeting. She also indicated there have been 99 child complaints filed with 16% being withdrawn during that same fiscal year. Mediation is now a part of the child complaint process.
- **Focused Monitoring** – Heidi Atkins Lieberman indicated ten districts had a focused monitoring last school year. There are six districts scheduled for this school year. The focused monitoring visits have been aligned with the scheduled MSIP visits.
- **Virtual Schools** – Heidi Atkins Lieberman indicated that the virtual school started on August 15 with all state funded seats allocated. 111 of Missouri's 115 counties have students participating with a third of the students being full time. The incident rate of students with disabilities is higher than the state average. It was suggested that a presentation be given on some examples of how the virtual school is being utilized in school districts.
- **End of Course Exams** – Heidi Atkins Lieberman reported that DESE is close to awarding the contracts and expect to implement for Algebra I, Biology, and English II by the 2008-09 school year. These tests will replace the current Missouri Assessment Program (MAP) tests used in grades 10 and 11.
- **MO Options Program** – Heidi Atkins Lieberman indicated she recently checked with Shawn Brice on the status of this option for DOC. Shawn Brice has not heard back from DOC yet. Lynda Roberts indicated there are some logistic issues being discussed.
- **OSEP Leadership Conference** – The small concurrent sessions were very good.

Number of Panel Meetings Per Year – Panel members discussed the possibility of going to quarterly meetings instead of six meetings per year. Other suggestions included avoiding meetings during weeks with a state holiday and scheduling meetings on different days. The October meeting would be cancelled and the new member orientation would be scheduled with the December meeting.

Learning Disabilities Association (LDA) – LDA has a flip chart that costs \$10 that was developed as a guide for teachers to use in the classroom with students with specific learning disabilities.

Panel Meeting – June 22, 2007

Missouri Career Centers – Shawn Brice, Director of the Career Special Needs Section in the Division of Career Education, presented information to the panel regarding Missouri's Career Centers. For more information, go to their website at dese.mo.gov/divcareered/special_needs_index.htm. Shawn Brice is also the Civil Rights Compliance Director for DESE and the director of the Missouri Options Program (dropout prevention program). Shawn Brice indicated there are 57 area career centers in Missouri; many with special needs programs with some having specific programs geared to special education students.

As the Civil Rights Compliance Director, Shawn Brice is responsible for conducting district onsite reviews each year. He reviews the district's policies and procedures for discrimination and accessibility issues.

The Missouri Options program is geared toward all 17 year olds who are behind on credits needed to graduate and is a good tool to reduce drop out rates for students with disabilities. When completing the program, students receive a regular high school diploma. Shawn Brice also mentioned that each year the Division of Career Education holds an annual transition conference in Springfield which brings in around 3,000 career educators. They have granted the Division of Special Education's request to partner with their transition institute during the same week to better collaborate and potentially increase participation at both conferences.

Election of Officers – Bev Woodhurst indicated there had been difficulty obtaining nominations this year and suggested that the process be discussed at a meeting prior to elections next year.

DESE Update

- **IMACs System** – Heidi Atkins Lieberman indicated that approximately 150 districts are currently on IMACS. Since IMACS is still in the development and testing stage, it is limited to districts doing their monitoring self-assessments and grant districts.
- **Incentive Grant Update** – Heidi Atkins Lieberman indicated 45 districts were approved for funding and seven are in the revision process. Those seven will be approved after they have completed their revisions.
- **State Personnel Development Grant (SPDG) Update** – Heidi Atkins Lieberman indicated the grant is based on an integrated model that proposes combining Positive Behavioral Supports (PBS), Reading First, Professional Learning Communities, Response to Intervention (RTI), and school to work to better impact student achievement.
- **SELS/SELS2** – Heidi Atkins Lieberman indicated that the Division has been communicating with school districts through SELS for the past several years. SELS membership is limited to only one contact per district. To provide these messages to a larger audience, SELS2 was created (the same messages are sent via SELS and SELS2). Anyone wishing to receive SELS messages can subscribe to SELS2. A flyer was created by the Division to advertise SELS2. If panel members would like a copy of the flyer to share with their stakeholder groups, contact Lina Browner. Heidi indicated this is a good way to keep up with what the Division is doing and encouraged all panel members to subscribe. To subscribe to SELS2, go to dese.mo.gov/divspeced/sels2_subscribe.html. SELS messages are archived at dese.mo.gov/divspeced/Administration/ListServPostings/LSPostings.html.
- **State Board Meetings** – Heidi Atkins Lieberman indicated that the State Board swore in a new board member, Derio Gambaro, at its last meeting. The State Board received a report on the status of the St. Louis City School District indicating that the transition board is in place. The elected school board tried to stop the transition by filing a motion in court but was not successful.
- **OSEP Determination Letter** – Heidi Atkins Lieberman indicated that many people misunderstood what the OSEP determination for the state of Missouri really meant and, even though there were a few bad media reports, she felt DESE did well with just a few

things needing to be fixed. For a copy of the SELS message regarding this topic go to: dese.mo.gov/divspeced/Administration/ListServPostings/LS06.22.07.html.

- **Bylaw Question/Alumni Members for the Panel** – After the last panel meeting, Heidi Atkins Lieberman asked NCRRC (North Central Regional Resource Center) to check with other states regarding this issue. NCRRC received responses from 23 states with only three using alumni members (the alumni members were used for different reasons for various committees).
- **Virtual Schools** – Heidi Atkins Lieberman indicated that 2,500 children have signed up and that everything is on schedule. They have a contractor for elementary and high school. At this time, Heidi Atkins Lieberman is not sure how many are students with disabilities.

OSEP Leadership Conference – Bev Woodhurst indicated each year a panel member is invited to attend the OSEP Leadership Conference along with representatives from DESE and the Parent Training and Information Centers. This year the conference is August 8-10, 2007, in Washington, D.C. It was suggested that a parent from the panel attend. Pat Jackson volunteered and the panel agreed to have her attend.

New Panel Member Orientation – It was suggested the panel ask North Central Regional Resource Center (NCRRC) to provide new member orientation again this year. It has been provided for the last two years and the members who have attended felt it was very helpful. It was suggested that it be done in conjunction with the October 12, 2007, panel meeting.

Election of Executive Committee Members – Kristen Callen, Pat Jackson, Patti Simcosky, and Martha Crabtree were elected.

Standing Subcommittees

The panel decided the following six standing committees would drive much of the panel's meeting agendas in the future. The committees are expected to meet prior to and during the SEAP meetings and provide updates and make formal recommendations to the entire panel for consideration.

Rules & Regulations

Section 300.652(a)(2) Comment publicly on any rules or regulations proposed by the State regarding the education of children with disabilities

Defined Purpose

- (1) review any rule changes in special education proposed by DESE
- (2) review current rules and regulations when appropriate making suggestions for change
- (3) provide a forum for panel members so that they can be kept abreast of special education proposed bills

The Rules and Regulations Subcommittee activities include the following:

With approval of the State Plan for Part B by the State Board of Education in April 2007, the Rules and Regulations Subcommittee anticipated that few issues would require its attention during 2007-2008. While no action was required by the subcommittee, members took particular note of the following issues.

- ✚ Heidi Atkins Lieberman discussed the determination letter received from the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP). She clarified that the “Needs Assistance” determination was issued to many other states, it focused on strict compliance requirements only, not student performance, and was based on 2004-05 data.
- ✚ The question was raised about possible impact on special education students of a new state law that defines and addresses all forms of bullying in schools.
- ✚ Panel members were encouraged to review OSEP’s suggested changes to the State Performance Plan and to provide comments during the public comment period.
- ✚ Preliminary data for FY 07 was presented on child complaints, due process hearings, and dismissals. It was noted that mediation is not part of the child complaint process.
- ✚ The State Performance Plan (SPP) and Annual Performance Review (APR) are available for public comment. Both are to be submitted to OSEP by February 1, 2008.
- ✚ Heidi Atkins Lieberman reviewed data on child complaint issues and comparison data by year since 2002-2003.
- ✚ Stan Johnson reported on implementation of end-of-course (EOC) tests for high school students that will replace the Missouri Assessment Program (MAP). EOC tests in Algebra I, English II, and Biology will be implemented in 2008-2009, and special education students will receive accommodations as specified in their IEPs.
- ✚ Formal Recommendation #9, which addresses collecting data by survey on the child complaint process, was discussed and a final recommendation will be made in June.

Evaluation

Section 300.652(a)(3) Advise the SEA in developing evaluations and reporting on data to the Secretary under section 618 of the Act

Defined Purpose

- (1) ensure that evaluations and collection of data are appropriate and complete as directed by the panel and OSE (data watchers)
- (2) ensure that decisions are data based
- (3) track the improvement plan (CIMP)
- (4) prepare the SEAP annual report

The Evaluation Subcommittee activities include the following:

- ✚ Received approval from the Panel to publish and disseminate the SEAP 2007-2008 Annual Report.
- ✚ Panel approved reporting SEAP annual report from June 1-May 31 of each year so that the report can be approved at the June meeting and able to be disseminated to the public by July 1. This meets OSEP regulations.
- ✚ Reviewed the Missouri Special Education Annual Performance Report (APR) and State Performance Plan (SPP) for the reporting period July 1, 2007-June 30, 2008.
- ✚ Reviewed the panel bylaws. No additions or changes were recommended.
- ✚ The SEAP 2007-2008 Annual Report has been compiled in DRAFT format for Panel members to review and accept at the June 6, 2008, Panel meetings.






Monitoring

Section 300.652(a)(4) Advise the SEA in developing corrective action plans to address findings identified in Federal monitoring reports under Part B of the Act

Defined Purpose

- (1) review statewide monitoring trends
- (2) review corrective action plans (CAP) and improvement plans (IP) submitted to OSEP
- (3) review MSIP cycle plans
- (4) review due process and child complaints results

The Monitoring Subcommittee activities included the following:

-  Received and reviewed Child Complaint and Due Process survey information. This data represented responses from parents/guardians and from school district personnel. This data represented timelines followed, contacts and processes followed, and other data related to formal complaints filed over a period of several years. This data was representative of numerical ratings as well as individual comments.
-  Reviewed and discussed the data and was concerned with the discrepancy in the number of surveys submitted by school district personnel vs. parents/guardians. Responses from school districts exceeded the number of responses from parents/guardians. One theory was that this task had probably been assigned to school staff as a part of a job responsibility, thus expectation to comply might have been higher than that of the parent/guardian. The subcommittee also discussed that the parents/guardians might not want to take the time to fill out the survey given their experience through the process.
-  Recommendations were made to DESE to continue to collect the data to be reviewed during the following year.
-  Reviewed the total number of complaints and due processes filed in various regions of the state and in certain school districts. Achievement, dropout, and discipline rates for students with disabilities will be closely monitored. This information can be compared in the future to determine if there are any relationships to school districts that are identified for “Focused Monitoring” by DESE and those who received child complaints or are involved in due process procedures.
-  Discussed the opportunity to look at MSIP Questionnaires in more detail as they relate to parents/guardians responses. There was a recommendation to DESE to see if any additional questions might be included that would better describe perception of special education process and procedure. This could be accomplished but would not be as simple as it might seem. Recommendation to DESE to pursue this as a possibility.

Programs

Section 300/652(a)(5) Advise the SEA in developing and implementing policies relating to the coordination of services for children with disabilities.

Defined Purpose

- (1) Provide panel input to the Effective Practices section of DESE/DSE: to act as an advisory board in the development of initiatives rather than just to the finished products.

The Programs Subcommittee activities include the following:

-  Reviewed Missouri Part B State Performance Plan for 2005-2006 through 2010-2011.

- ✚ Reviewed and made recommendations to the Missouri Part B APR for the upcoming years' indicator percentages.
- ✚ Reviewed OSEP's Determination Letter to Missouri.
- ✚ Reviewed special education updates on current issues impacting Effective Practices such as the Missouri Project, Virtual Schools, End of Course Exams, Teacher Alternative Certification, State School Placement, and Transition.
- ✚ Requested and reviewed information about the IMACs System, State Personnel Development Grant, Incentive Grant, Blue Ribbon Panel, MO Options Program, MO Career Centers, Department of Mental Health program in public school districts, State Improvement Grant, and Civil Rights Compliance in public school districts.
- ✚ Formally expressed appreciation to SEAP presenters Shawn Brice, Walt Brown, John Heskett, Mary Morningstar, Barb Gilpin, and Stan Johnson in providing timely information regarding special education programs throughout the state of Missouri.
- ✚ Formally expressed appreciation to Heidi Atkins Lieberman in establishing an open-door policy to all interested parties regarding special education issues and providing timely informational programs such as the monthly Webinar Questions & Answers, SELS 2, as well as, providing current special education updates in a timely manner to the SEAP members.

Nominations

Defined Purpose

- (1) Provide panel with slate of officers for next fiscal year for nomination
- (2) Review and recommend nomination requests for panel members.

The Nominations Subcommittee activities include the following:

- ✚ Selected a slate of officers to serve for the FY 2008–09.
- ✚ Recommended applicants to DESE for nomination to serve as panel members for the following categories:
 - 4 vacancies from Parents of Children with Disabilities and/or Individuals with Disabilities
 - 1 vacancy from State and Local Education Officials
 - 1 vacancy from Administrators of Programs for Children with Disabilities
 - 1 vacancy from Representative from the State Child Welfare Agency responsible for Foster Care

Public Comment

Section 300/652(a)(1) Advise the State Education Agency (SEA) of unmet needs within the State in the education of children with disabilities

Defined Purpose

- (1) Identify available sources (including but not limited to: taxpayers, parents, teachers, school administrators, school boards) which may be available to facilitate public input. The public input received shall be disseminated to the panel to assist the panel in carrying out its prescribed function.

The Public Comment Subcommittee activities include the following:

- ✚ Throughout the year, the Public Comment subcommittee continued discussions to identify additional avenues that should be available to the public regarding public forums or opportunities for public input. The committee determined it was not seeking to duplicate existing efforts but to be certain every avenue is readily available for the public to provide comments or present concerns regarding special education. The goal for the committee is to disseminate public input received to the panel.
- ✚ The Public Comment subcommittee explored whether DESE could install a button on its webpage for public comment and as a way for members of the subcommittee to access the comments received. After investigation of the possibility, DESE reported back to the panel and indicated the comments must go directly to the panel members not to DESE. A member of the subcommittee subsequently agreed to set up and provide a separate email address for this purpose but was eventually unable to do so. The subcommittee continued to explore various ways to obtain a separate e-mail address button on DESE's webpage that could only be accessible to the panel members and contacted the Missouri Assistive Technology Center as its division had recently set up a separate account for a similar purpose on a public webpage. The Center's Director, Diane Golden and Jeaneal Alexander have been in contact with Steve White at DESE to set up a viable method to enable public comment directly to Public Comment subcommittee members. Once the public comment link is added to the website, topics for SEAP to focus on will be based on comments received.
- ✚ The panel was advised on a number of issues both from DESE and from individual panel members surrounding special education. Visitors are welcome to comment at any of the panel meetings. Comments can also be submitted via email, telephone, fax or in writing to:

Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education
 Division of Special Education
 P.O. Box 480, Jefferson City, MO 65102
 Email: webrepliespedc@dese.mo.gov Phone: 573-751-5739 Fax: 573-526-4404

Future Focus

It is with great hope and dedication from many members that the advisory panel continues its close relationship with DESE over the next year. As members come and go, the focus stays strong within the panel that it will advise DESE on programs and services provided across our state to serve individuals with their needs in special education. It is also anticipated that the panel will continue to address issues of upcoming legislation as it presents itself for review and that the members of each subcommittee will work closely to review all information provided and give responses necessary to DESE according to the by-laws as a volunteer panel.

Closing

The advisory panel continuously works towards the understanding of, respect for, support for, and the appropriate education of, all children with disabilities in Missouri schools. The panel believes in optimizing the educational achievement of every child through a strong education system that is proactive and supportive of students, families, and educators. To this end, the panel will use its strength as a broad-based constituency group to plan an active and influential role in decisions affecting policies, programs, and services. Improving the education of children with disabilities is never an accident; it is the result of high intention, sincere effort, intelligent direction, skillful execution, and the vision to see obstacles as opportunities.

Acknowledgement

The panel wishes to acknowledge the contributions of Heidi Atkins Lieberman, Pam Williams, Mary Corey, and Lina Browner, along with other DESE staff, for their assistance in providing essential information through a variety of reports and presentations.

Links

Additional information about the panel can be found at:

dese.mo.gov/divspeced/Administration/AdvisoryPanel/94142mainpage.html

Additional information from the Division of Special Education can be found at:

dese.mo.gov/divspeced/

DESE maintains a webpage of special education links at:

[dese.mo.gov/divspeced/FFpage3.html#Special Education Links](http://dese.mo.gov/divspeced/FFpage3.html#Special_Education_Links)

2007-08 Membership Roster

Sue Alderton-Canton
Jeaneal Alexander-Columbia
Heidi Atkins Lieberman-Jefferson City
Brenda Boyd-Florissant
Russ Brock-Fayette
Angela Brown-Thayer
Kristen Callen-Springfield
Amanda Coleman-Kansas City
Karen Coleman-Farmington
Martha Crabtree-Cabool
Cathy Einhorn-Chesterfield
DeAnn Fiedler-St. Clair
Diane Francis-Maryville
Doreen Frappier-Columbia
Melissa Frazier-Steelville
Patricia Grassa-Springfield
Tammy Hicks-Laquey
Eileen Huth-Ballwin
Patricia Jackson-Raytown

Roxie Lanier-Warrensburg
Ginger Luetkemeyer-Jefferson City
Jerry Neal-Corder
Kim Oligschlaeger-Jefferson City
Dorothy Parks-Jefferson City
Lynda Roberts-Jefferson City
Mary Kay Savage-Kansas City
Patti Simcosky-Independence
Kenneth Southwick-Belton
Elizabeth Tattershall-Jefferson City
Sherri Tucker-Lee's Summit
Theresa Valdes-Jefferson City
Teresa VanDover-Columbia
Stephen Viola-St. Louis
Stephanie Wickers-Jefferson City
Raymond Wicks-St. Louis
Beverly Woodhurst-Perry
Shirley Woods-Kansas City
Joan Zavitsky-Eureka

Terms

APR – Annual Performance Report
AT – Assistive Technology
AYP – Annual Yearly Progress
CIFMS – Continuous Improvement and Focused Monitoring System
CIMP – Continuous Improvement Monitoring Process
DESE – Department of Elementary and Secondary Education
DOC – Department of Corrections
DYS – Department of Youth Services
ECSE – Early Childhood Special Education
EP – Effective Practices
EPA – Exceptional Pupil Aid
ESY – Extended School Year
FAPE – Free Appropriate Public Education
FERPA – Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act
IDEA – Individuals with Disabilities Education Act
IEP – Individualized Education Program
LD – Learning Disability
LRE – Least Restrictive Environment
MAP – Missouri Assessment Program
MSB – Missouri School for the Blind
MSD – Missouri School for the Deaf
MSIP – Missouri School Improvement Plan
NCLB – No Child Left Behind
NCRRC – North Central Regional Resource Center
OSEP – Office of Special Education Programs
RFP – Request for Proposal
RPDC – Regional Professional Development Center
RtI – Response to Intervention
SB – Senate Bill
SEAP – Special Education Advisory Panel
SICC – State Interagency Coordinating Council
SIG – State Improvement Grant
SPP – State Performance Plan
SSSH – State Schools for Severely Handicapped